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V. — *The Ablaut in English.*

By BENJAMIN W. WELLS, PH. D.,

FRIENDS' SCHOOL, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

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It has been said that the consonants are the skeleton of a language, the vowels its flesh and blood. While the vowels are more subject to internal change and to influence from without than the consonants, they reflect more clearly in their modifications the spirit of a language. This is in a peculiar degree true of the Germanic dialects, and in no one of them more noticeably than in the Old English. The most important modification of vowels in the Indo-European group of languages is the ablaut, which is preserved with surprising fulness and regularity in the Germanic dialects, and best of all in Old English, sometimes called Anglo-Saxon, which I take for the foundation of this study.

The processes of phonetic development and decay have never shown themselves more general or more rapid than in the later periods of English, so that the study of the development of the ablaut during this time is as difficult as it is instructive. Except in the points mentioned in section I., my aim is less to make this study exhaustive than to make it accurate and suggestive.

The abbreviations are as follows: OG. stands for Old Germanic; WG., for West Germanic; G., for Gothic; ON., for Old Norse; OHG., for Old High German; OS., for Old Saxon; OE., for Old English; ME., for Middle English; NE., for New English. Middle English

comprehends the period from 1150 to Elizabeth's reign ; New English applies to what is now in good use. Verbs which are found only in the present are marked with an interrogation point ; those which have both strong and weak forms with a + ; W. stands for weak, S. for strong. New English verbs which, though weak, have strong participial adjectives, are marked Ws.

SECTION I. SCOPE OF THE ESSAY.

I propose in this paper to give a statement of the Germanic ablaut, its classification, and some account of its extent in the various dialects, and secondly, to show how this ablaut was developed in OE. I shall give a complete list of strong verbs in OE. with the corresponding strong verbs of OS., OHG., ON., G., so far as such exist, and with added signs to show whether, and how, they appear in ME. and NE. The OE. words are given in the normalized West-Saxon spelling.

Since a satisfactory analysis of the ME. ablaut would require a more detailed study of the dialects and the geographical relations of the documents than the limits of this paper would allow or the state of ME. phonetics warrant, only those ME. verbs have been considered which show sometimes or always weak forms ; but the general principles which caused and controlled the weakening have been shown. Here also, for convenience of reference, the words are given in the OE. West-Saxon form. The list of ME. strong verbs can be found in section III.

The forms of the ablaut in NE., their origin, and the reasons why they were sometimes abandoned have been treated in detail.

SECTION II. THE GERMANIC ABLAUT.

The ablaut is classified according to the vowel of the present stem. There are four proper ablaut classes, with the present vowels in Indo-European : a^1 , a^1i , a^1u , a^2 . There is in OE. a fifth class, but this was in OG. a reduplicating class, and got its OE. ablaut by contraction of the reduplication with the root-syllable. The OG. presents, corresponding to these Indo-European vowels, have e , ei , eu , a . The preterit has in the singular a darker sound in the first three classes, and in the fourth, where this was impracticable, its place was taken by lengthening ; the preterit singular then was a , ai , au , \bar{o} . The preterit plural, on the contrary, owing to the accent, took the lightest possible form, which in class I. was nothing or

“schwa;” in II., *i*; in III., *u*; in IV. the plural follows the analogy of the singular and has *ō*, though this can be explained as a contraction (Scherer, *Deutsche Sprache*, 257). Where the vowel had vanished in I, if but a single consonant followed, the preceding reduplication, united with the root and the resulting vowel, was *ā*; thus *ḅhar* would have in the preterit *babr-um* = *bārum*; but where a double consonant followed, such contraction was impossible, and the place of the vowel was taken by an *u*-swarabhakti; thus, *ḅhandh* becomes *babndum* = *bundum* in the preterit. The vowels of the preterit plural are then *ā* (*u*), *i*, *u*, *ō*. The participle has also, owing to the accent, the lightest possible forms; but here there was no reduplication, and so in class I. the “schwa” took the form *e* before single mutes or fricatives, and elsewhere *o*. In IV. the vowel of the present was retained. The vowels of the participle are then *e* (*o*), *i*, *u*, *a*.

The four ablaut classes have therefore in OG. the following forms: Ia. (before single mutes or fricatives), *e*, *a*, *ā*, *e*; Ib. (before single nasals or liquids), *e*, *a*, *ā*, *o*; Ic. (before two consonants), *e*, *a*, *u*, *o*; II., *ei*, *ai*, *i*, *i*; III., *eu*, *au*, *u*, *u*; IV., *a*, *ō*, *ō*, *a*. From these ablaut classes all strong verbs in Germanic are developed according to regular phonetic laws.

The number of strong verbs in the various Germanic dialects varies with the extent of the literature. There are in Gothic, 138; in ON., according to Vimmer, 194, but this number is not complete; in OHG., 237; in OE., 253, together with a large number of uncertain verbs. In these numbers, preterito-presentia and verbs of class V. are excluded. We may regard a verb as OG. if it is common both to G. or ON., and to OE., OS., or OHG., that is, to East and West Germanic; many verbs, however, are confined to a single dialect, and of these there are 19 in Gothic, 35 in OHG., and 39 in OE.; others are found only in the East Germanic group or in the West Germanic group, but are not common to both; of such there are 2 in Gothic, 52 in OHG., and 53 in OE.; of verbs which are certainly OG., the Gothic has 107; OHG., 150; OE., 161. The number of distinct verbal stems with ablaut in all the dialects is about 400. The OE. has the fullest and truest picture of the ablaut. In the detailed examination which follows, in each class the OG. verbs are placed first, then the WG., and finally those confined to OE. The abbreviations which follow the verb indicate its subsequent history. Notes at the end of section III. explain anomalies and defend the classification wherever it seems doubtful.

SECTION III. THE OLD ENGLISH ABLAUT.

Class Ia. OG. ablaut *e*, *a*, *ā*, *e*.

The regular OE. ablaut is *e*, *æ*, *ē*, *e*; but this is subject to the following modifications.

1. Initial *g* changes the ablaut to *ié* (*y*), *ed*, *eā*, *ié* (*y*). For example, *giéfan*, *geáf*, *geāfon*, *giéfen*.

2. When the vowel is initial, it coalesces with the reduplication in the preterit singular to *ē*. For example, *etan* has *ēt* in the preterit singular.

3. Preceding *r* has the same influence as following *r*, see Ib., in *troden* from *tredan*, and in *brocen* from *brecan*. The same irregularity occurs in G. *trudans* and *brukans*.

4. Following *h* breaks *e* to *éo* and *æ* to *éa*. Before a vowel the *h* may fall out and *éo* coalesce with the following vowel to *ēo*. For example, *séohan* (*sēon*), *séah*.

5. When the present stem ends in *ja*, *e* becomes *i* and the consonant following is doubled. The simple consonant reappears in the other forms. Examples are: *biddan*, *licgan*, *sittan*, *þiggan*.

6. Grammatical change of *s* to *t*, *ð* to *d*, and *h* to *g* in the preterit plural and participle, owing to the Indo-European accent, occurs in *wesan* (cf. NE. *was*, *were*), *cweðan*, *fēon*, *plēon*, *sēon*.

This class contains 27 verbs. 20 are OG.; 4 are WG.; 3 are OE. only.

The OG. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
biddan ME. NE.	biddan	bittan	biðja	bidjan
brecan ME. NE.	brekan	brecan	breka W.	brikan
cweðan ME. NE. W. note 1	quethan	quedan	kveða	qīþan
drepan ME. +		trefan	drepa	
etan ME. NE.	etan	ezzan	eta	itan
giéfan ME. NE.	gebhan	geban	gefa	giban
giétan ME. NE.	getan	gezzan	geta	gitan
lesan ME. +	lesan	lesan	lesa	lisan
licgan ME. NE.	liggjan	liggan	liggja	ligan
metan ME. NE. W.		mezzan	meta	mitan
nesan.		nesan		nisan
recan ME.		rechen MHG. ?reka		rikan
sēon ME. NE.	sehan	sehan	siā	sahvan
sittan ME. NE.	sittan	sizzan	sitja	sitan
tredan ME. NE.		tretan	troða	trudan
þiggan ME. ?	þiggean W.	dikkan W.	þiggja	

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
wefan ME. NE.		weban	vefa	
wegan ME. NE. W.		wegan	vega	wigan
wesan ME. note 2.	wesan	wesan	vesa	wisan
wrecan ME. NE. W.	wrekan	rehhan	reka	wrikan

The wg. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	
cnedan ME. NE. W.		cnetan	cf. ON. knōða W.
fēon		fehan	cf. ON. feginn
plēon	plegan	pflegan	
sprecan ME. NE.	sprecan	sprehhan	

OE. only are : frigan, screpan, swefan. Sievers (As. Grammatik) adds *fetan* ; I do not know upon what evidence.

ME. are 21. 18 S. ; 2 S. and W. ; 1 present only.

NE. are 16. 11 S. ; 5 W.

Class Ib. OG. ablaut *e*, *a*, *ā*, *o*.

The OE. ablaut before *l*, *r*, is *e*, *æ*, *ā*, *o* ; before *m*, it is *i*, *a*, *ā*, *u*. Preceding *w* coalesces with the ablaut vowels to *u*, *o*, *ō*, *u*, in *çuman*, *com* (often written *coom* and *cōm*, but hardly long), *cōmon*, *cumen*.

The class contains 10 verbs 6 are OG. ; 4 are WG.

The OG. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
beran ME. NE.	beran	beran	bera	baíran
cuman ME. NE.	kuman	cuman	koma	qíman
niman ME.	niman	neman	nema	níman
sceran ME. NE.		sceran	skera	
stelan ME. NE.	stelan	stelan	stela	stílan
teran ME. NE.		zeran		taíran

The wg. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.
cwelan ME.	quelan	quelan
dwelan ME.?	dwelan	twelan
helan ME.	helan	helan
þweran note 3		dweran

ME. are 9. 8 S. ; 1 present only.

NE. are 5, all S.

Class Ic. OG. ablaut *e*, *a*, *u*, *o*.

The OE. ablaut when undisturbed by consonant influence was *e*, *æ*, *u*, *o*. This occurred only in : *bregdan*, *brestan*, *stregdan*, *þrescan*,

for in all other cases a following *r*, *l*, *h*, or nasal, changed the vowels.

1. Before *r*+ consonant and *h*+ consonant the ablaut is *éo*, *éa*, *u*, *o*; before *l*+ consonant it is *e*, *éa*, *u*, *o*; a preceding *g* can change *e* to *ié*.

2. Before nasals the ablaut is *i*, *a*, *u*, *u*.

3. There are 3 peculiar presents; *frignan*, *murnan*, *spurnan*. In *frignan* the *i* is due to the *n*, otherwise the verb is like *brestan*; in *murnan*, *spurnan*, the *u* for *éo* may be compared to the *o* for *e* in *troden*, Ia. 3., and with the influence of *rn* in NE. (*fern*, *earn*, etc.). The other parts of these verbs are like those of *béorgan*.

4. Grammatical change of *ð* to *d*, and *h* to *g* occurs in the preterit plural and participle of *wéorðan*, *felhan*, and would occur in the questionable *séorðan*.

This class has 77 verbs. 39 are OG.; 22 WG.; 16 OE. only.

The OG. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
béorgan ME.	bergan	bergan	biarga	baírgan
brestan ME. NE. W.	brestan	brestan	bresta	
bindan ME. NE.	bindan	bintan	binda	bindan
bregdan ME. + NE. W.	bregdan	brettan	bregða	
bringan note 4	bringan	bringan		briggan
brinnan ME. NE. W.	brinnan	brinnan	brenna	brinnan
déorfan ME. W.	derven	derben MHG.	diarfa	
drincan ME. NE.	drinkan	trincan	drekkka	drigkan
felhan ME. W.	felhan	felhan		filhan
findan ME. NE.	findan	fintan	finna	finþan
frignan ME. +	frignan		fregna	fraihnan
giéldan ME. + NE. W.	geldan	geltan	gialda	gildan
giéllan ME. NE. W.		gellan	gialla	
-ginnan ME. NE.	-ginnan	-ginnan		-ginnan
helpan ME. NE. W.	helpan	helfan	hialpa	hilpan
hrindan			hrinda	
hwéorfan ME.	hwerbhan	hwerban	hverfa	hwaírbán
linnan ME.		linnan	linna W.	linnan
rinnan ME. NE.	rinnan	rinnan	rinna	rinnan
sincan ME. NE.	sinkan	sincan	sökkva	siggan
singan ME. NE.	singan	singan	singva	siggvan
slican ME. NE.		cf. slíhhan	slínka Swed.	
slingan ME. NE.		slingan	slingva	
spinnan ME. NE.		spinnan	spinna	spinnan
springan ME. NE.	springan	springan	springa	
spurnan ME. W. NE. W.	spurnan	spurnan +	sperna +	
stincan ME. NE.		stincan	stökkva	stiggan
stingan ME. NE.			stinga	stiggan?

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
swelgan ME.		swelgan	svelga	
swellan ME. NE. Ws.		swellan	svella	
sweltan ME.	sweltan	swelzan	svelta	swiltan
swéorfan ME. NE. W.	swerbhan	swerban	sverfa	swairban
swimman ME. NE.		swimman	svimma	
þrescan ME. NE. W.		drescan	þriska	þriscan
þringan ME.	þringan	dringan	þröngva	
wéorpan ME. NE. W.	werpan	werfan	verpa	wairpan
wéorðan ME. note 5	werthan	werdan	verða	wairþan
windan ME. NE.	windan	wintan	vinda	windan
winnan ME. NE.	winnan	winnan	vinna	winnan

The wg. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	
belgan ME.	belgan	belgan	cf. ON. bolginn
bellan ME. NE. W.		bellan	
céorfan ME. + NE. W.		kerven MLG.	cf. O. FRIS. kerva
climban ME. + NE. W.		chlimban	
clingan ME. NE.		chlingan	
crimman		chrimman	
delfan ME. + NE. W.	delbhan	telban	
féohtan ME. NE.		fehtan	cf. ON. fíkta W.
grimman		grimmen MHG.	
hlimman		limman	
hrimpan		rimpfan	
limpan ME.		limpfan	
melcan		melcan	
scrincan ME. NE.		schrinken MLG.	
selcan		selken MG.	
sinnan		sinnan	
stéorfan ME. NE. W.	sterbhan	sterban	
sweorcan ME.	swerkan		
swindan ME.		swintan	
swingan ME. NE.	swingan	swingan	
þrintan		drinden MG.	
wringan		ringen	

OE. only are :

béorcan ME. + NE. W.	grindan ME. NE.	swincan ME.
cinnan	hwéorran	teldan ME. W.
cringan note 6	meltan ME. NE. Ws.	tingan
cwincan	murnan ME. W. NE. W.	þindan ME.
giélpan ME. NE. W.	stregdan	þingan ME.
géorran ME.		

Doubtful are : séorðan, scéorfan (Sievers).

ME. are 60. 48 S. ; 7 S. and W. ; 5 W.

NE. are 42. 22 S. ; 20 W. 2 are Ws. See section V. C. 8.

Class II. OG. ablaut *ei, ai, i, i*.

The OE. ablaut is *ī, ā, i, i*.

1. Initial *g, sc* can change *ā* to *eā* (*geān, sceān*).

2. Following *h* is dropped between vowels and *ī* coalesces with the following vowel to *eo*; hence arises a similarity with class III. which caused some confusion. See note 7.

3. Grammatical change of *ð* to *d* and *h* to *g* occurs in the preterit plural and participle of *līðan, mīðan, scrīðan, snīðan, tēon, þēon, wrēon*.

The class has 56 verbs. 35 are OG.; 11 are WG.; 10 OE. only.

The OG. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
bīdan ME. NE.	bīdan	bītan	bīða	beidan
bītan ME. NE.	bītan	bīzan	bīta	beitan
blican ME. +	blikan	blichan	blikja	
cīnan ME. +	kīnan	chīnan		keinan
clīfan ME.	klībhan	cliban	klīfa	
drīfan ME. + NE.	drībhan	triban	drīfa	dreiban
gīnan		gīnan	gīna	
grīpan ME. + NE. W.	grīpan	grīfan	grīpa	greipan
hnīgan	hnīgan	hnīgan	hnīga	hneiwan
hnītan			hnīta	
hrīnan ME. ?	hrīnan	hrīnan	hrīna	
līðan ME.	līþan	līðan	līða	leiþan
-lifan ME.	libhan	liban		leiban
lēon	lihan	lihan	līa W.	leihvan
mīgan ME. note 7			mīga	
rīdan ME. NE.		rītan	rīða	
rīsan ME. NE.	rīsan	rīsan	rīsa	reisan
scīnan ME. NE.	skīnan	scīnan	skīna	skeinan
scītan ME. NE. W. note 8		scīzan	skīta	
scrīðan ME.	scrīdan	scrītan	skrīða	
sīgan ME.	sīgan	sīgan	sīga	
slītan ME. + NE. W.	slītan	slīzan	slīta	
snīðan ME.	snīþan	snīðan	snīða	sneiþan
spīwan ME. note 9	spīwan	spīwan	spýja Cl. V.	speiwan
stīgan ME. note 7	stīgan	stīgan	stīga	steigan
strīdan ME. NE.		strītan	strīða +	
swīcan ME.	swīcan	swihhan	svikja	
swīfan ME. ?			svīfa	sweiban
tēon ME. ?	tīhan	zīhan	tīa W.	teihan
þēon ME. note 7.	þīhan	dīhan		þeihan
wīcan ME. ?	wīkan	wihhan	vīkja	
-wītan ME. + NE. W.	wītan	wīzan	vīta W.	weitan
wlītan ME.			līta	
wrīðan ME. NE. W.			rīða	
wrītan ME. NE.	wrītan	rīzan	rīta	

The WG. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	
flitan ME.		flizan	
glīdan ME. NE. W.	glīdan	glitan	
gnīdan ME.	gnīdan	gnītan	
hlīdan	hlīdan		
mīdan ME. ?	mīdan	mīdan	
scrifan ME. NE. Ws.	skribhan	scriban	cf. Lat. scribere
sēon ME. note 7		sihan	ON. sīa W.
slīpan ME. ?		slifan	
smītan ME. NE.		smizan	
stričan ME. NE.		strihhan	
wreōn ME. note 7		rīhan	

OE. only are :

dwīnan ME. +	rīnan ME. +	snīcan ME. ? note 11
grīsan ME.	rīpan note 10	slīdan ME. NE.
nīpan	sīcan ME. W.	slifan ME. ?
		þwītan

Doubtful are : cidan, cnīdan, cwīnan, wrīdan (Sievers).

ME. are 48. 31 are S. ; 8 are S. and W. ; 1 is W. ; 8 are present only.

NE. are 18. 11 are S. ; 7 are W. 1 is Ws. ; and one strong verb has a strong participial adjective differing from the participle ; see section V. C. δ.

Class III. OG. ablaut **eu, au, u, u.**

The OE. ablaut is *ēo, ēa, u, o*. Some OE. verbs have *ū* in the present ; and this seems to have been OG. also, at least in some cases ; its origin is uncertain. Cf. Schmidt *Vocalismus*, I. 140 ff.

1. Following *h* is elided between vowels ; the present remains *ēo* however, being unchanged by the contraction.

2. Grammatical change of *s* to *r*, *ð* to *d*, and *h* to *g*, occurs in the preterit plural and participle of *cēosan*, *drēosan*, *fleosan*, *hrēosan*, *teosan*, *hrēoðan*, *leoðan*, *reōðan*, *sēoðan*, *fleon*, *fleon* ; it would have occurred also in the questionable *swēon*.

The class contains 52 verbs. 36 are OG. ; 7 are WG. ; 9 are OE. only.

The OG. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
bēodan ME. note 12	biodan	biotan	bioða	biudan
brēotan		briezen MHG.	briota	

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
būgan ME. + NE. W.		biogan	biuga	biugan
cēosan ME. + NE.	kiosan	chiosan	kiosa	kiusan
clēofan ME. + NE. W.	kliobhan	clioban	kliufa	
crēopan ME. + NE. W.		cf. criochan	kriupa	
drēogan ME. +	driogan	triogan	drȳgja W.	driugan
drēopan ME. W.	driopan	triufan	driupa	
drēosan ME.	driosan			driusan
flēogan ME. NE.		fliogan	fliuga	
flēon ME. NE. W.	fliohan	fliohan	flȳja W.	þliuhan
flēotan ME. NE. W.	fliotan	fliozan	fliota	
frēosan ME. NE.		friosan	friosa	
gēotan ME.	giotan	giozan	giota	
hlēotan ME.	hliotan	hliozan	hliota	
hrēosan ME.			hriosa	
hrūtan ME. +		rūzan	hriota	
lēodan	liodan	liotan		liudan
lēogan ME. NE. W.	liogan	liogan	liuga	liugan
lēosan ME. NE. Ws.	liosan	liosan		liusan
lūcan ME.	lūkan	lūhhan	lūka	lūkan
lūtan ME. +		lūzēn W.	lūta	
nēotan	niotan	niozan	niota	niutan
rēocan		riuhhan	riuka	
rēodan			rioda	
rēofan ME. NE. note 13			riufa	
scēotan ME. NE.	skiotan	sciozan	skiota	
scūfan ME. NE. W.		scioban		skiuban
sēodan ME. NE. Ws.		siodan	sioða	
slēopan ME.		sliofan		sliupan
smūgan		smiegen MHG.	smiuga	
sūgan		sūgan	sūga	
sūpan ME.		sūfan	sūpa	
tēon ME.	tiohan	ziohan	tiuga	tiuhan
þrēotan		driozan	þriota	þriutan
þūtan ME. W.		diozan	þiota	

The wg. verbs are:

OE.	OS.	OHG.	
brēowan ME. + NE. W.		briuwen MHG.	cf. ON. brugga W.
brūcan ME. ? NE. W.	brūkan ?	brūhhan W.	cf. O. FRIS. bruka S.
cēowan ME. ? NE. W.		chiuwan	
grēotan	griotan		
hrēowan ME. + NE. W.	hreuuhan	riuwan	cf. ON. hryggva W.
rēotan		riozan	
sprūtan ME. ? NE. W.		spriezen MHG.	cf. O. FRIS. sprūta S.

OE. only are:

brēodan ME.	grēosan	smeocan
crūdan ME. NE. W.	hēodan	strūdan
dūfan ME. +	hrēodan, cf. ON. part. hroðinn	sūcan ME. NE. W.

Doubtful are: *gēopan*, *hēofan*, *spēoftan*, *swēon* (Sievers).

ME. are 37. 22 are S.; 10 are S. and W.; 2 are W.; 3 are only in the present.

NE. are 21. 5 are S.; 16 are W. 2 are Ws. See section V. C. *δ*.

Class IV. OG. ablaut, *a*, *ō*, *ō*, *a*.

The OE. ablaut is *a*, *ō*, *ō*, *æ*, yet the participle often follows the analogy of the present and is written *a*, which before nasals is the regular form.

1. Initial *g*, *sc* may change the ablaut to *ed*, *eō*, *eō*, *ed*.

2. Between vowels *h* is elided and the vowels coalesce to *ēa*; so *stēan*, Gothic *slahan*. Following *x* (*hs*) changes *a* to *éa* in *wéaxan*; this gives the verb the appearance of Class Va., and accordingly we find in the preterit the form *wēox* for and with the regular *wōx*.

3. When the OG. present stem was *ja* the consonant following the root-vowel was doubled and the vowel was umlauted from *a* to *e*; *éa* to *ie*; *ed* to *ié*. Examples are: *steppan*, *hllehhan*, *sciēppan*. The double consonant and the umlaut are confined to the present. See Class Ia. 5.

4. *Standan* had *n* originally only in the present, but in OE. it has made its way into the participle also.

5. Grammatical change of *h* to *g* in the preterit plural and participle occurs in *flean*, *hllehhan*, *lean*, *slean*, *pwēan*. The *bb* in *hebban* becomes *f* in the other forms.

This class contains 31 verbs. 25 are OG.; 5 are WG.; 1 is OE. only.

The OG. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
acan ME. + NE. W.			aka	
alan			ala	alan
dafan ME.				daban
dragan ME. NE.	dragan	tragan	draga	dragan
faran ME. NE. W.	faran	faran	fara	faran
flēan ME. NE. W.			flā	
galan ME.		galan	gala	
gnagan ME. NE. W.		gnagan	gnaga	
grafan ME. NE. Ws.	grabhan	graban	grafa	graban
hebban ME. NE.	hebbjan	hefjan	hefja	hafjan
hladan ME. NE. Ws.	hladan	hladan	hlaða	hlaþan
hliehhan ME. NE. W.	hlahhan	hlahhan	hlæja	hlahjan
sacan ME. NE.	sakan	sachan		sakan

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
scacan ME. NE.	skakan		skaka	
scafan ME. + NE. Ws.		scaban	skafa	skaban
sciédðan + note 14		scadōn W.	skaða W.	skabþjan
sciéppan ME. + NE. Ws.	skapen	scaphan	skepja +	skapþjan
slēan ME. NE.	slahan	slahan	slā	slahan
standan ME. NE.	standan	stantan	standa	standan
sweran ME. NE.	swerjan	swerjan	sverja	swaran
tacan ME. NE. note 15			taka	cf. tēkan
þwēan	þwahan	dwahan	þvā	þwahan
wacan ME. NE.			vaka W.	wakan
wadan ME. NE. W.		watan	vaða	
wéaxan ME. NE. W.	wahsan	wahsan	vaxa	wahsjan

The wg. verbs are:

OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.
bacan ME. + NE. W.		bachan	baka W.
lēan ME. ?	lahan	lahan	
spanan ME.	spanan	spanan	spana W.
steppan ME. + NE. W.	steppan	stepfan W.	
wascan ME. NE. W.		wascan	vaska W.

OE. only is: rafan.

ME. are 27. 19 are S.; 7 are S. and W.; 1 only present.

ME. are 23. 9 are S.; 14 are W. 4 are Ws.; see section V.
C. δ.

Class V.

The verbs of this class could not develop an ablaut in OG., and formed their preterits by reduplication only. They are classified according to the vowel of the OG. present. Va. has *a* followed by two consonants; Vb. *ā*; Vc. *ō*; Vd. *ai*; Ve. *au*. The last four can in no case develop an ablaut; the *a* in Va. is hindered by the two consonants from contracting with the reduplication in OG. (cf. Ic. in section I), and so is distinguished from class IV., which has *a* followed by one consonant, or an equivalent consonant combination.

In OE. the present in Va. becomes *éa* before liquids, *a* before nasals; when *nh* follows, the *n* coalesces with the *a* to *ō*, and the *h* is elided between vowels. In Vb. the present becomes *æ* before consonants, *ā* in *verbis puris*. In Vc. it remains *ō* except where a *ja* stem causes an umlaut to *ē*. In Vd. it is *ā*, which after *g* may become *eā*. In Ve. it is *ēa*.

The preterit retained the reduplication in Gothic, but in the other Germanic dialects traces only remain of the older form. In OE.

these are *dréord*, *léort*, *réord*, for and with *drēd*, *lēt*, *rēd* in Vb., and *heht*, *léolc*, for and with *hēt*, *lēc* in Vd. The regular preterit vowel is *ē* when the present has *æ*, *a*, or when the preterit shows traces of reduplication, but *eo* when the present has *éa*, *ēa*, *ā*, *ō*. Occasionally we find *eo* for *ē* by analogy. For the cases of grammatic change, see the participle.

The participle is always like the infinitive except where this has umlaut (*wēpan*) when the participle has the unumlauted form, and in *hōn*, *fōn*, where the participle retains the *n* and has grammatic change of *h* to *g* (*hengen*, *fangen*). The same occurs also in the preterit, singular and plural (*hēng*, *fēng*).

The class contains 56 verbs. 31 OG.; 10 WG.; 15 OE. only.

The OG. verbs are :

Va.	OE.	OS.	OHG.	ON.	G.
blandan ME.		blandan	blantan	blanda	blandan
féaldan ME. NE. W.			faldan	falda	falpan
féallan ME. NE.		fallan	fallan	falla	
fōn ME.		fāhan	fāhan	fā	fahan
gangan ME. note 16		gangan	gangan	gagga	gaggan W.
héaldan ME. NE.		haldan	haldan	halda	haldan
hōn ME. NE.		hāhan	hāhan	hā	hahan
stéaldan					staldan
wéaldan ME. note 17		waldan	waltan	valda	waldan
Vb.					
blāsan ME. ? note 18			blāsan	blāsa	blēsan
grātan ME		grātan		grāta	grētan
lātan ME. + NE. W.		lātan	lāzan	lāta	lētan
māwan ME. NE. Ws.			mājan +	mā	
rādan ME. + NE. W.		rādan	rātan	rāpa	rēdan
sāwan ME. NE. Ws.		sāhan +	sājan W.	sā	saian
slāpan + ME. + NE. W. note 19		slāpan	slāfan		slēpan
wāwan			wājan W.		waian
Vc.					
blōtan			blōzan +	blota +	blōtan
grōwan ME. NE.			gruoan W.	grōa	
hwōpan note 20					hwōpan
rōwan ME. NE. W.				rōa	
Vd.					
hātan ME. + note 21		hētan	heizan	heita	haitan
lācan ME. W.				leika	laikan
sceādan ME. + NE. W.		skēðtan	sceidan		skaidan
swāpan ME. + NE. W. note 24		swēpan	sweifan	sveipa +	

OE.	OS.	OHC.	ON.	G.
Ve.				
bēatan ME. + NE.		bōzan	banta +	
būan note 22.	buan W.	būwan +	būa	bauan +
ēacan	ōkan	ouhhōn W.	auka	aukan
ēadan	ōdan		aūða	
hēawan ME. NE. Ws.	hauuan	houwan	hōggva	
hlēapan ME. + NE. W.	hlōpan	loufan	hlaupa	hlaupan

The wg. verbs are :

OE.	OS.	OHC.	ON.
Va.			
bannan ME. + NE. W.		bannan	banna W.
spannan ME. ? NE. W.		spannan	spanna W.
wēalcan ME. + NE. W.		walchan	vālka W.
wēallan ME.	wallan	wallan	cf. vella Ic., G. vulan ?
Vb.			
blāwan ME. NE.		blājan +	
crāwan ME. NE.		crājan +	
dræðan ME. + NE. W.	drādan	trātan	
þrāwan ME. NE.		drājan +	
Vc.			
hrōpan ME. ?	hrōpan	ruofan +	G. hrōpjan, ON. hrōpa W.
wēpan ME. + NE. W.	wōpan	wuofan +	G. wōpjan, ON. cēpa W.

OE. only are :

Vb.	hlōwan ME. ? NE. W.	Ve.
cnāwan ME. + NE.	hwōsan	brēatan, note 25
Vc.	spōwan	dēagan
blōwan ME. + NE. Ws.	swōgan ME. + note 23	hēafan, note 25
cnōðan	Vd.	hnēapan, note 25
flōwan ME. + NE. W.	swāfan, note 24	sprēatan, note 25
glōwan ME. + NE. W.		

ME. are 40. 18 are S.; 17 are S. and W.; 1 is W.; 4 are only in the present.
NE. are 29. 9 are S.; 20 W.; 4 are W. s. See section V. C. δ.

NOTES.

1. *Cweðan* is weak in NE., *bequeathe* ; the isolated form *quoth* is strong.
2. *Wesan* in NE. only in *was, were*. This, with *sodden* and *forlorn*, is the only case of grammatic change in NE. It is also the only case of distinction between the preterit singular and plural.
3. *þweran* Ib. is classed as OG. because of ON. *þverra* Ic.
4. *Bringan*. The usual preterit *brōhte*, and the participle *brōht*, are from a weak **bengan* which occurs in OS. In ME. *bringen* is the only relic of the strong forms.
5. *Wēorðan* occurs in NE. only in the phrase, "woe worth the day."
6. *Cringan* cannot be the source of NE. *cringe*, which would in that case be strong. It is not ME.
7. *Mīgan*, *stīgan*, *sēon*, *þēon*, *wrēon* may take forms of III. throughout, owing to the analogy of the present.

8. *Scītan* is OG. and ME. NE. It does not occur in OE. Mss., but was certainly OE.

9. *Spīwan*. ME. NE. are from *spēowian* OE. W.

10. *Rīpan*, a corruption of OE. *rieƿan* W. ME. has from the same source a strong verb of III. from which is derived the NE. *reap*. *Rīpan* is obsolete in ME.

11. *Snīcan* may be OG., cf. Danish *snigge* S. ON. is W. The NE. *sneak* corresponds neither in spelling nor pronunciation to this verb.

12. *Bēodan*. Many ME. and all NE. forms unite with those of *biddan*. The verb survives in *forbid*.

13. *Rēofan*. In ME (Cursor M. 7809), and in NE. *reeve*.

14. *Sciēððan*. ME. *scaðen* W. is from OE. *scēððan* W.

15. *Tucan* was probably borrowed from ON. It occurs but once in OE., in Aelfric's Grammar.

16. *Gangan* has in ME. no preterit. Its place is taken by OE. *ēode*.

17. *Wēaldan*. NE. *wield* is from OE. *wieldan* W.

18. *blāsan* is OG. and ME. It does not occur in OE. Mss., but it is found in Lye's Glossary.

19. *Slēpan* has weak forms frequently in late OE.

20. *Hwōpan*. NE. *whoop* is of recent origin.

21. *Hātan*. NE. only in the obsolete *hight*.

22. *Būan*. The OE. preterit is W., but the participle is S.

23. *Swōgan* is not OG., for Gothic *swōgan* is W.; but it may be WG., for OS. *swōgan* occurs only in the present.

24. *Swāfan*, *swāpan* are derived from Class II. Cf. OE. *swīfan*, ON. *sveifa*, and note 25.

25. *Brēatan*, *hēafan*, *hnēapan*, *sprēatan*, are derived from Class III. Cf. OE. *brēotan*, Gothic *hiufan*, *hniupan*, OE. *sprūtan*, and note 24.

The following table groups the statistics of the preceding section : —

Class.	Whole no. of OE. verbs.	OG.	WG.	OE. only.	Whole no. of ME. verbs.	S.	S. and W.	W.	Present only.	Whole no. of NE. verbs.	S.	W.	W _s .
Ia.	27	20	4	3	21	18	2	0	1	16	11	5	0
Ib.	10	6	4	0	9	8	0	0	1	5	5	0	0
Ic.	77	39	22	16	60	48	7	5	0	42	22	20	2
II.	56	35	11	10	48	31	8	1	8	18	11	7	2
III.	52	36	7	9	37	22	10	2	3	21	6	15	2
IV.	31	25	5	1	27	19	7	0	1	23	9	14	4
V.	56	31	10	15	40	18	17	1	4	29	9	20	4
Total.	309	192	63	54	242	164	51	9	18	154	73	81	14

SECTION IV. THE DECAY OF THE ABLAUT IN MIDDLE ENGLISH.

To what extent and for what causes was the ablaut abandoned in ME.?

The table has shown that more than one fourth of the OE. strong verbs which remain in ME. have sometimes weak forms, though but

nine are always weak. There were four causes which produced this result.

1. The ME. phonetic development would often make two verbs, which could be easily distinguished in OE., almost identical in sound. In this case the verbs could be most easily distinguished if one of them took weak forms. In the same way the phonetic development would make two or more ablaut vowels identical, and so make weak endings necessary to distinguish the tenses. To these considerations are due the weak forms of the following 25 verbs:—

Bannan. The *nn* caused confusion of the present and preterit.

Béorcan, céorfan, déorfun. The following *r* in some ME. dialects would make present and preterit identical, hence the weak forms. The preterito-presens *déarf* may also have affected *déorfun*.

Béatan, drædan, rædan, lætan, hātan, sceādan, lost all phonetic distinction in the ablaut in ME. The final dental in the preterit also gave them the appearance of weak verbs. *Grætan* was kept strong only to save it from confusion with *Grētan* W. *Lācan, hlēapan, slācan,* though without the aid of the final dental, have yielded to the same influence.

Blōwan, brēowan, hrēowan, wēalcan, through the influence of the *w*, became identical in all ablaut forms, and so were weakened. In *blōwan* this was aided by the necessity of distinguishing it from *blāwan*.

Céorfan, see *béorcan*.

Cīnan is rarely weak, perhaps because in the preterit it might have been confused with *cann* preterito-presens. See *wītan*.

Delfan, geldan, teldan. The *l* like *r* in *béorcan*. Here would belong *fēaldan, fēallan*, but the weak forms of these verbs are doubtful and probably errors.

Déorfan, see *béorcan*. *Drædan,* see *béatan*.

Drēopan, drepan, rare and weak, in different documents, to avoid confusion with one another.

Geldan, see *delfan*. *Hātan, hlēapan,* see *béatan*.

Hrēowan, see *brēowan*. *Lācan, læcan, rædan,* see *béatan*.

Sceādan, slācan, see *béatan*.

Slītan, wītan, owing to the dental (cf. *béatan*) had in the preterit plural the appearance of shortened weak forms, and these gradually asserted themselves elsewhere. *Wītan* was helped in this by the preterito-presens *wāt* (cf. *cīnan* and *cann, déorfan* and *déarf*).

Wēalcan, see *brēowan*. *Wītan,* see *slītan*.

All these words, except *béatan*, so far as they occur, are weak in NE.

2. A weak verb of similar sound and allied meaning occasionally weakened a strong verb. Thus we have the following 5 cases:—

Felhan Ic. becomes first *felen* Ib., and then yields to the analogy of *fēlan* W.

Gripan is confused in ME. with *grippen* W. which is derived from the OE. word.

Lesan is confused in ME. with *lēsan* W.

Rīnan is confused with OE. *rignan*, ME. *reinen* W.

Sīcan is confused with *sicettan* OE W. ME. W.

3. When the OE. present has a peculiar vowel so that it resembles weak rather than strong verbs we may expect weak forms. Thus are explained *hliehhan*, *sciēppan*, *steppan*, *wēpan*, owing to the umlaut; *bregdan*, *frignan*, *swōgan*, owing to the absorbed *g*, which produced a diphthong otherwise unknown among strong verbs; *būgan*, *dūfan*, *hrūtan*, *lūtan*, *pūtan*, *murnan*, *spurnan*, for *ū*, *u* is elsewhere found only in weak verbs; *scedfan* may also be placed here, for in this verb *ea* becomes *ea*, which is without analogy among the strong verbs. In all 15 verbs.

4. Where the ON. had weak forms corresponding to an OE. strong verb, the ME. occasionally followed this dialect. There are 5 cases.

bacan ON. baka.

dwīnan ON. dvīna.

swāpan ON. sōpa.

blīcan ON. blika.

glōwan ON. glōa.

5. Residua. *Acan* and *flōwan* are usually W. in ME. and always in NE. I know of no other reason for their weakening than the analogy of *bacan*, *blōwan*.

There are also 8 verbs which show sporadic weak forms in ME. and are for the most part strong in NE. These weak forms have little if any grammatical importance, and are rather to be looked upon as graphical errors. The verbs are: *cēosan*, *cēofan*, *climban*, *cnāwan*, *crēopan*, *drēogan*, *drīfan*, *hebban*.

6. The verbs which occur only in the present can now be classified according to the analogy of the others. Strong were: *dweolan*, *hrīnan*, *lēan*, *mīðan*, *slīfan*, *swīfan*, *picgan*; probably also *snīcan*, *wīcan*, for *strīcan*, *swīcan* were strong, though *blīcan*, *sīcan* were weak. *Tēon*, too, was strong, but with a change of class to III. See section III. note 7.

Strong and weak were: *blāsan*, *brūcan*, *cēowan*, *hlōwan*, *hrōpan*, *slīpan*, *spannan*, *sprūtan*.

7. If we contrast the ME. with the MHG., we shall find the latter far more conservative in its ablaut, and more uniform in its development. This is due to the conservative character of the HG. vocalism, and to its freedom from foreign influence. But though the ME. is less tenacious of the ablaut than the MHG. we have here no completed process, but rather the beginnings of a change which is even now not completed, a prophecy which is being fulfilled. What the NE. will be is clearly foreshadowed in the scattered weak forms which are like the drops that tell of the coming shower. Still the persistency of the ME. ablaut in the midst of the far-reaching phonetic and inflectional changes which characterized this period is a cause of surprise when we turn to the next stage in the history of the language, the NE. of to-day.

SECTION V. THE ABLAUT IN NEW ENGLISH.

Less than one half of the OE. strong verbs remain in NE., and of these more than one half are weak. In place of 309 OE. verbs we have but 154, of which but 73 are strong; while of the OHG. 280, the NHG. has preserved the ablaut in 153. Even where the ablaut is retained it consists of but two or, at the most, three vowels, while the phonetic laws of ME. and NE. have caused wide divergence even among verbs of like class, crossing and confusing the sharply cut lines of the OE. ablaut.

In NE. the preterit singular and plural have the same vowel, except in *was, were*; grammatic change is abandoned, its only relics being *were* and the participial adjectives *sodden* and *forlorn*. The ablaut vowels are governed in sound by the following consonants; sometimes the vowel of the preterit is found in the participle, but more often the reverse is true.

In the following the present, preterit, and participle are treated in order, and the OE. classification retained. Where the NE. form does not correspond phonetically to the OE., notes are added. A list of strong verbs which have been added since the OE. time, and of strong participial adjectives corresponding to weak verbs, is appended.

A. The Present.

a. The present of the NE. strong verbs is from the OE. present in 71 cases.

Ia. Bid, break, eat, get, give, lie, see, sit, speak, tread, weave (11).

Ib. Bear, come, shear, steal, tear (5).

Ic. Bind, cling, drink, fight, find, begin, grind, run — note 1, shrink, sing, sink, sling, slink, spin, spring, sting, stink, swim, swing, win, wind, wring (22).

II. Bide, bite, drive, ride, rise, shine, slide, smite, strike, stride, write (11).

III. Choose — note 2, cleave, fly — note 3, freeze, reeve, shoot — note 4 (6).

IV. Draw, heave, forsake, shake, stand, swear, take, wake (8).

V. Beat, blow, crow, fall, grow, hold, know, throw (8).

β. In two cases the NE. present is from the participle; IV. *slay*, V. *hang*, are from *slāgen*, *hangen*. The contracted OE. presents *stēan*, *hōn* were abandoned even in ME., and presents formed after the analogy of the other verbs of these classes from the participles.

γ. The following new strong verbs occur in NE. (11).

Ia. Spit, OE. spittan W.

II. Chide, OE. cīdan W. (Sievers S.).

Ib. Wear, OE. werian W.

Hide, OE. hȳdan W.

Ic. Dig, OE. dīcjan W.

Strive, O. FRENCH *estriver*.

Ring, OE. hringan W.

Thrive, ON. þrifa S.

Stick, OE. sticca, noun.

IV. Stave, OE. noun nom. pl. stafas.

String, OE. streng, noun.

NOTES. 1. *Run* is from ME. *runnen* = *ronnen* = *urnen* = *ornen* = OE. *ġornan* (*eō* for *eo*) = *rinnan*.

2. *Choose* from *cōsan* (*eo* = *eō*), see note 4.

3. *Fly*. OE. *flēon* and *flēogan*, to avoid confusion with one another, received — the first, a dialectic present (*fly*); the second, weak forms.

4. *Shoot*, from OE. *scēotan* (*eō* for *eo*). The preterit *shot* suggests *scotjan* OE. W., but is from the participle OE. *scoten*.

B. The Preterit.

The preterit corresponds to the OE. preterit singular in 40 cases ; in 14 it is from the participle aided by the preterit plural ; in 13 from the participle alone ; in 6 cases it is due to a change of class. The causes of these variations from the regular development will be considered after the lists have been given.

a. From the preterit singular are :

Ia. Ate, bad, gave, got, lay, sat, saw (7).

Ib. Came (1).

Ic. Drank, began, ran, sang, sank, shrank, sprang, stank, swam, won (10).

II. Abode, drove, rode, rose, shone, strode, smote, wrote (8).

IV. Shook, forsook, stood, took, woke (5).

V. Beat — note 1, blew, crew, fell, grew, held, hung — note 2, knew, threw (9).

β. From the participle and preterit plural are :

Ic. Bound, clung, fought, found, ground, slung, slunk, spun, stung, swung, wound, wrung (12).

II. Bit, slid (2).

It is to be noticed that in Ic. the tendency is to abandon the preterits in *a* and to form them in this way ; so one often hears, though one seldom sees, the preterits *begun*, *drunk*, *sung* ; see also V. B. ε.

γ. From the participle alone are :

Ia. Broke, spoke, trod, wove (4).

Ib. Bore, shore, stole, tore (4).

III. Chose, clove, froze, rove, shot ; see V. A. note 4 (5).

The four verbs of Ia. followed in ME. the example set by OE. *tredan* (section III. Ia. 3) and, owing to the *r* and *w*, developed an *o* in the participle.

δ. The following have changed class :

Ib. *Hove*, *swore*, from OE. *hōf*, *swōr*, IV. ; as in German, from the participle, as all verbs of Ib., owing to the umlaut in the present.

Ic. *Struck* from OE. *strāc* II. We find the regular *stroke* in Shakspeare. The cause of the change is not clear.

V. *Flew*, *drew*, *slew*, from OE. *flēah* III., *drōh* IV., *slōh* IV. These verbs would have lost the ablaut entirely, see section VI., if they had not changed class.

ε. The later additions to the strong preterits follow the analogy of *a*. in the following; Ia. *spat*; Ic. *rang*; II. *strove*, *throve*. From the analogy of *β*. are: Ic. *dug*, *strung*, *stuck*; II. *chid*, *hid*. *Stove* follows the analogy of *hove*, — that is, it is from the analogy of participles of Ib.

NOTES. I. *Beat* is phonetically the equivalent of both *bēatan* and *bēot*; orthographically it corresponds to *bēatan*, but the verb is nevertheless strong owing to the participle *beaten*.

2. *Hung*, ME. *hong* = *hēong* = *hēong* = OE. *hēng* (*ēo* for *ē* in class V., see section III.; *ēo* = *eō* is common, see section V. A. note 2, 4).

Why did not all these verbs follow the OE. preterit singular? In Ia. the preceding *r*, *w*, in Ib. the following *r* *ʒ*, would have acted on the OE. ablaut in such a way as to make present and preterit singular alike; to avoid this the participle is taken. In Ic. the OE. had beside the form in *a* a secondary form in *o* for the preterit singular before nasals; this was too near the *u* of the participle to resist its analogy. In II., *bit* and *slid*, owing to the dental, seemed like shortened weak preterits (cf. *chid*, *hid*, and section IV. 1 *slitan*) and so took the place of the regular forms. This similarity caused the dropping of the participial ending in *slid*; and in three cases *shit*, *slit*, *twit*, it got into the present also, making a wholly weak verb, see section VI. The irregularity in *struck* is not explained. In III. since OE. *ēo* and *ēa* are indistinguishable in NE., either the participle must be taken or the class changed. The shortening in *shot*, like that in *trod*, is due to the dental. In IV. the class is changed when unlaut, or absorbed *g* in the present, removed the verbs from the analogy of their associates.

C. The Participle.

The NE. past participle is regularly from the OE. form, but in 7 cases it is from the preterit, and in one case from a participial adjective; an attempt to explain these irregularities is made at the close of the section.

a. From the OE. participle are:

Ia. Bidden — note 1, broken — note 2, eaten, given, lain, spoken — note 2, trodden, woven — note 2 (8).

Ib. Borne, come, shorn, stolen, torn (5).

Ic. Bound, clung, drunk, fought, found, ground, begun, run, shrunk, slung, slunk, sprung, spun, stung, stunk, sung, sunk, swum, swung, won, wound, wrung (22.)

II. Bitten, driven, ridden, risen, slid or slidden, smitten, stridden, struck (see V. B. 8.), written (9).

- III. Chosen, cloven, flown, frozen, shot (see V. A. note 4), rove (6).
 IV. Drawn, forsaken, shaken, slain, taken, waken (and hove, sworn, see V. B. δ.) (8).
 V. Beaten, blown, crown, fallen, grown, known, thrown (7).

β. From the preterit singular are :

- Ia. Got and gotten, sat (2).
 II. Abode, shone (2).
 IV. Stood (1).
 V. Held — note 3, hung (2).

γ. From a participial adjective is *seen*, OE. *gesiene*. It does not correspond to any OE. verbal form.

δ. Participial adjectives have sometimes preserved strong ablaut vowels which are lost in the verbs. These correspond in their vowel always to the OE. participle. They are: *blown* (of flowers, etc.), *forlorn*, *graven*, *hewn*, *laden*, *molten*, *mown*, *shapen*, *shaven*, *shriven*, *sodden*, *sown*, *swollen*. There is also a participial adjective with a strong ending from an OE. weak verb; this is *rotten*, OE. *rotjan*, W. The OE. *strīcan*, II. has in NE. gone over to Ic. in preterit and participle, see V. B. δ., but the adjective *stricken* preserves the old ablaut vowel.

ε. The new strong participles follow the analogy of α. in Ib. *worn*; Ic. *dug*, *rung*, *stuck*, *strung*; II. *chidden*, *hidden*, *striven*, *thriven*; IV. *stove*, but with a change of class to Ib., like *hove*, V. B. δ. The analogy of β. is followed in Ia. *spat*.

NOTES. 1. *Bidden* owes its vowel to the analogy of the present.

2. *Broken*, *spoken*, *woven*, see V. B. γ.

3. *Held*. There is an obsolete *holden* and a participial adjective *beholden* from the OE. participle.

Why did not all these words follow the OE. participle? In Ia. *got*, *sat*, *spat*, owing to the dental, were taken for weak preterits, and, as such, transferred to the participle. *Seen* is not explained. In II. *abode*, had it developed regularly, would have fallen together with the participle of *bid*. *Shone* is not clear. In IV. *stood*, owing to the dental and the peculiarity of the present, is treated like a weak preterit, and so transferred to the participle. In V. *hela* shows the same dental influence that we have seen in Ia. and IV. *Hung* follows the analogy of all other strong verbs with *u* in the preterit, and transfers this form to the participle.

In general, the NE. ablaut vowels correspond to the OE.; where they do not, the special and peculiar influences are not difficult to

see. Simplicity has been the aim of every change, practical common-sense has been the guiding power. We have now to see how far the verbs which have become weak in NE. owe the loss of the ablaut to the same causes which we have seen at work here.

SECTION VI. THE NEW ENGLISH WEAKENED VERBS.

There are 81 verbs which have become weak in NE. Here the present alone preserves an ablaut vowel, which is usually that of the OE. present, though in the following four cases the participle has been preferred: *flay*, OE. *flaegen*; *shit*, *slit*, *twit*, OE. *sciten*, *sliten*, *æt-witen*. See section V. A. β., and B. ad fin. In a few cases the phonetic development of the NE. present is slightly irregular, cf. for instance, *mourn* with *spurn*, but this belongs to the special history of the OE. sounds. The NE. weakened verbs are:

Ia. Knead, mete, bequeathe, weigh, wreak (5).

Ic. Bark, bell, braid, burn, burst, carve, climb, delve, help, melt, mourn, spurn, starve, swell, swerve, thrash, warp, yell, yelp, yield (20).

II. Glide, gripe, shit, shrive, slit, twit, writhe (7).

III. Bow, brew, brook, chew, creep, crowd, flee, fleet, lie, lose, rue, seethe, sprout, suck, shove (15).

IV. Ache, bake, fare, play, gnaw, grave, lade, laugh — note *i*, shape, shave, step, wade, wash, wax (14).

V. Ban, blow (of flowers, etc.), dread, flow, fold, glow, hew, leap, let, low, mow, read, row, shed, sleep, sow, span, swoop, walk, weep (20).

NOTE 1. *Laugh* is not from *hlæhhan*, but from the unumlauted *hlāhan*, which is not uncommon in OE.

The loss of ablaut is due to the character of the vowel in the present and the nature of the following consonant. The rules may be formulated as follows:

1. The verb is strong when the vowel is followed by *n* + consonant, *s*, and *c* (except after *ū*), and when the OE. present vowel is *i*, *e*, *ie*, *e*, *eo*, *ī*, except as provided in 2. This accounts for 60 strong verbs out of 73. It fails to account for Ia. *lie*; III. *cleave*, *fly*, *reeve*, *shoot*; IV. *draw*, *slay*; V. *beat*, *blow*, *crow*, *grow*, *know*, *throw*.

2. The verb is weak when the vowel is followed by liquid + consonant (except in case of *ea*), *m* + consonant, *g*, *w*; and usually when the present vowel is followed by a dental; further, whenever the vowel is *eo*, *ea*, *āe*, *a*, *ā*, *ō*, *u*, *ū*; except as provided above. This accounts for 72 weak verbs out of 81. It fails to account for Ia. *bequeathe*, *wreck*; II. *gripe*, *shrive*, *writhe*; III. *lose*; IV. *ache*, *bake*; V. *fold*.

Exceptions to 1. *Lie*, Ia., is strong to distinguish it from *lie*, III.; it is often confused in speaking with *lay*, W. *Cleave*, *reeve*, have frequent weak forms, but they are still regularly strong. *Fly* has changed class, and is strong to distinguish it from *flee*. *Shoot* has the same forms that it would have were it weak. *Draw* and *slay* have changed class to preserve the ablaut. *Beat*, if it had shortened the preterit and participle, would have fallen together with these forms of *bet*; it retained, therefore, the long forms and the ending *en*. *Blow*, *crow*, *know*, *throw*, Vb., and *grow*, Vc. (by analogy of Vb.) are strong, though *mow*, *sow* in Vb. are Ws., and all other verbs in Vc. are W. Why Vb. and Vc. are treated differently in NE. is unexplained.

Exceptions to 2. *Bequeathe* owes its weak forms to its legal usage; cf. *hanged*, legal for *hung*. *Wreck* is W. because of OE. *wreccan*, NE. *wreck*. *Gripe* is unexplained. *Shrive*, owing to a consciousness of its foreign origin, and to its ecclesiastical use (cf. *bequeathe*) is Ws. A derivative with an ablaut vowel is *Shrove-tuesday*. *Writhe* is unexplained. *Lose* is W. because of OE. *losjan*, W. *Ache*, *bake*, see IV. 4, 5. *Fold* is a denominative to *féald*, and not immediately from the verb.

The influence of following consonants on the verbs is to be thus explained.

The Nasals. Single nasals do not affect the vowel, but *m* + consonant so far lowers the present of Ic. as to prevent ablaut. In IV., V. *n* + nasal is accompanied with ablaut partly on account of the analogy of Ic., but more on account of the peculiarity of the verbs (*stand*, *hang*. See V. A. β., B. note 2, C. ad fin.).

The Liquids. Single liquids do not affect the ablaut, but liquid + consonant always prevents ablaut in Ic., and tends to preserve it in Va., for it lowers the vowel of the present, and so destroys the distinction between the ablaut vowels in Ic., while it magnifies it in Va. Note the exception, *fold*.

The dentals, traces of whose influence we have already seen in section V. B. C., often produce weak verbs, but by no means regularly. To their influence, aided at times by the analogy of like-sounding weak verbs, we owe the weakening of Ia. *knead*, *mete*; II. *glide*, *shit*, *slit*, *twit*.

G and *g* + consonant unite in ME. with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong, which places these verbs out of the analogy of their class. Most of these become weak, a few change class, V. B. δ.; one only, *lie*, Ia., retains strong forms.

W, by coalescing with the preceding vowel, usually destroyed the ablaut. The peculiar exceptions are noted at the close of "Exceptions to 1."

S favors strong forms in III., except for *lose*; the cause is not clear.

C in IV. (NE. *k*) preserves the ablaut, and gives the OE. *ō* a short sound. I do not know the cause of either the shortening or the weakening.

Of the 81 NE. weakened verbs 41 only were always strong in ME.; 32 have strong and weak forms, 3 have only weak forms, and 5 are only in the present. Plainly, then, we have here only a continuation, or fulfilment of the ME. processes. There is nothing new here; no new elements, such as have affected the vocalism, have been at work; the old laws have only become more universal in their application. The desire for clearness and simplicity, the practical sense which surmounts every difficulty with sureness and readiness, has become more clearly marked, and so the English ablaut in its changing fortunes is a reflection of the mental characteristics of the race.

VI.—*General Considerations on the Indo-European Case-System.*

By W. D. WHITNEY,

PROFESSOR IN YALE COLLEGE.

THAT the whole system of declension in Indo-European language is, as compared with the system of verb-inflection, a matter of great and unsolved difficulty, will be generally admitted. No one of the three departments of expression involved in it—gender, number, case—has had even its main historical outlines laid down to the general satisfaction of scholars. The time, it would seem, has not yet come for dealing successfully with the subject. What is wanting, in order to put us in condition to do this, is (apart from the general improvement of linguistic philosophy), on the one hand, a better comprehension of the more modern and secondary declensional elements which have been produced here and there among the languages of our family; and, on the other